

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.(original) A welding shield gas for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel having a Ca concentration not less than 1 wt.ppm, the welding shield gas comprising:

an inert gas and nitrogen gas, the concentration of the nitrogen gas being 1 to 95 vol%.

2.(original) A welding shield gas for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel having a Ca concentration not less than 1 wt.ppm, the welding shield gas comprising:

an inert gas and helium gas, the concentration of the helium gas being 35 to 95 vol%.

3.(original) A welding shield gas for non-consumable electrode arc welding of a welding material comprising austenitic stainless steel having a Ca concentration not less than 1 wt.ppm, the welding shield gas comprising:

an inert gas, nitrogen gas, and helium gas, the concentration of the nitrogen gas being not less than 1 vol% and less than 65 vol%, and the concentration of the helium gas being 35 to 95 vol%.

4.(currently amended) A welding shield gas according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~
claim 1, the welded material comprising:

at least one of Al at a concentration not less than 10 wt.ppm, and Si at a concentration not less than 0.3 wt.ppm.

5.(currently amended) A welding shield gas according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~
claim 1, wherein the inert gas is argon gas.

6.(currently amended) A welding method for non-consumable electrode arc welding of welded material comprising austenitic stainless steel, the welding method comprising:

a step of using the welding shield gas according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~claim 1.

7.(original) A welding method according to claim 6, wherein the welding method is applied to fixed tube welding.